

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
29 September 2005 (29.09.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/091067 A3

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G03B 13/36**,
G02B 7/09, 7/28

House, 124 High Street, Meldreth, Royston, Hertfordshire
SG8 6BL (GB).

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/GB2005/000964

(74) Agents: **MERRYWEATHER, Colin, Henry** et al.; J.A.
Kemp & Co., 14 South Square, Gray's Inn, London WC1R
5JJ (GB).

(22) International Filing Date: 14 March 2005 (14.03.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0405773.3 15 March 2004 (15.03.2004) GB
0417762.2 10 August 2004 (10.08.2004) GB

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **1... LIMITED** [GB/GB]; St. John's Innovation Centre, Cowley
Road, Cambridge CB4 0WS (GB).

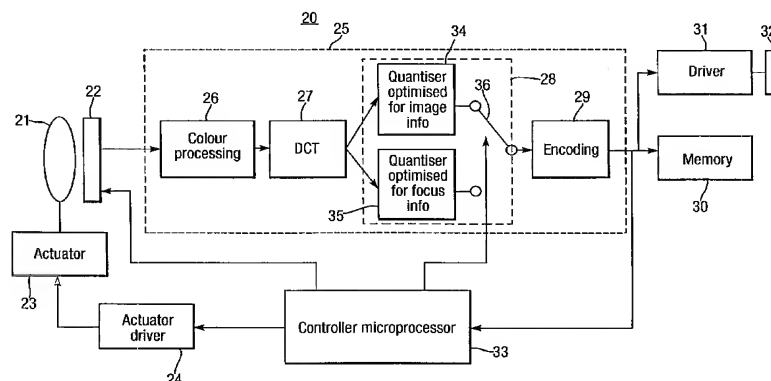
(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD,
MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG,
PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY,
TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU,
ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO,
SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN,
GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:
— with international search report

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: CAMERA AUTOFOCUS



(57) Abstract: A camera comprises an image sensor arranged to generate an image signal, and a lens arrangement, which focuses an image onto the image sensor, the focus being variable in accordance with a control signal applied thereto. In the case that a piezoelectric actuator experiencing hysteresis is used to drive movement of the lens arrangement to vary the focus of the image, autofocusing is achieved by applying a control signal to the piezoelectric actuator with a value at an extreme of a predetermined range and subsequently changing the control signal monotonically across the predetermined range to determine a position at which the focus quality is at an acceptable level. Thus, this position may be returned to despite the hysteresis. In the case that an encoder is arranged to encode the image signal from the image sensor into an encoded signal compressed form, the encoder is operated in two modes in which different spatial frequency components are encoded preferentially, the amount of data in one of the modes being used as the basis for autofocusing. To assist in autofocusing the position of the lens arrangement may be determined using a light source and an optical element which is fixed to and movable with the lens arrangement, the optical element being arranged so that movement of the lens arrangement causes variation in the light incident on the image sensor.

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— *before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments*

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(88) Date of publication of the international search report:

2 February 2006